The World

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AN EXAMPLE FOR JEROME.

DEP'T ATTORNEY J.F. CLARKE.

By the conviction of William O. Miles, Charles M. Wells and Frank M. Wandell, jr., the nest of sewer claim swindlers in Brooklyn has been effectively broken up.

Miles, at one time an Assistant District-Attorney in Brooklyn, and the head and front of the conspiracy, receives the maximum penalty of one year in the Kings County Penitentiary and a fine of $500, as does his clerk, Wells. Sentence has been deferred in the case of Wandell because of information furnished by him of value in following the trail higher up.

The interesting fact about the convictions is that they have been secured without fuss or fluster by a District-Attorney whose name is barely known in Manhattan. He has never posed as the protagonist of all civic virtues. He has not indulged in self-advertisement. He has gone about the matter without parade, in the belief that "the way to convict is to convict"—and he has convicted.

Mr. Clarke's work is not yet over. By the judicious use of the evidence in hand he has unearthed other evidence that should give new vigor to his search for rogues in office. From his prosecutions there is likely to result a complete reorganization of the loose system of administration under which the frauds have been possible.

The example is an excellent one for emulation on this side of the river. Mr. Jerome has been curiously out of the public view for a month. Has he been busy preparing for the sitting of his special Grand Jury?

As a result of the saving of $750,000 effected by the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx in the lighting contracts for next year, plans for a municipal electric light plant are in abeyance. They have not, however, been abandoned, and the site purchased by the city will be retained. It is not recorded that when the coon came down at sight of Capt. Scott's gun the captain proceeded to throw the gun away.

OPEN THE SUBWAY BOOKS!

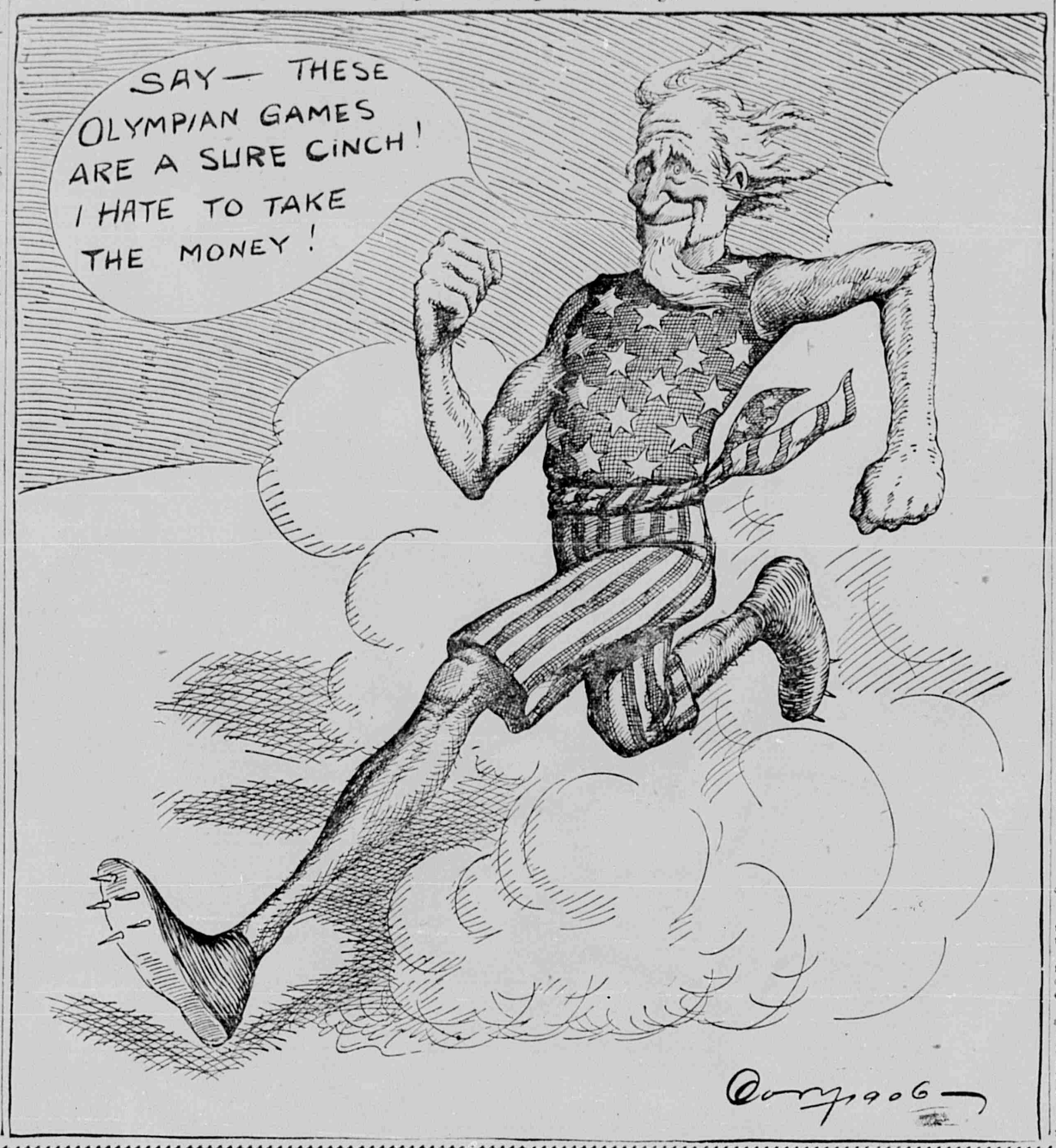
Jay Gould on a celebrated occasion displayed his stocks and bonds to his critics to satisfy their doubts. Why should not Mr. Belmont oblige the Comptroller and open his books to prove just how poor the Subway operating company is?

The best way to quiet scepticism is to let Mr. Metz see with his own eyes that entry of $12,000,000, representing payment for the McDonald lease, and the total of $22,600,000, expended for cars, generators, power plants and general equipment. If these figures leave him unconvinced it should only be necessary to introduce him into the mazes of operating expenses and interest charges and show him in what straits of corporation impecuniosity a profit of two cents on every five-cent fare leaves the company whose stock is in demand at 225.

Mr. Belmont should at least use these means to soften the heart of his landlord, who only asks for the rent nominated in the lease. Otherwise he may expect peremptory notice to move.

Uncle to the Fore.

By J. Campbell Cory.



Why the United States Is What It Is To-Day.

FOOTSTEPS OF OUR ANCESTORS IN A SERIES OF THUMBNAIL SKETCHES.

What They Did;
Why They Did It;
What Came Of It.

By Albert Payson Terhune.

No. 17.—GEORGE WASHINGTON—The Man of Destiny.

A VIRGINIA lad of fourteen had just received an offer that made him envied of all his neighborhood. Through family influence he had secured a commission as midshipman in the English navy. It was a chance few American boys could hope for. It meant a career.

The boy's widowed mother, whose eldest son he was, at the last moment entreated him not to go. He obediently doffed his new uniform and returned to his farm duties.

Thus George Washington lost the opportunity of rising to the rank of captain, or perhaps admiral, in England's navy, and was reserved by destiny for a future such as no other man of his century might attain.

A few years later a second equally brilliant opportunity for a career was shattered in a similar manner, and for the same great end. Young Washington had, when but eighteen, risen to the post of Public Surveyor (a position which enabled him to study topography and the habits of Indians, both of which acquirements were to be of great use later), and at nineteen was appointed Adjutant-General of Militia, with the rank of Major. But again Destiny intervened, in the guise of Duty, to snatch from him a career in the royal military service. His half-brother, Lawrence, fell ill and was ordered to Barbadoes. He could not go alone. George, resigning his rank and office, volunteered to accompany him. In Barbadoes he had a dangerous attack of smallpox, and there Lawrence died, bequeathing to George his splendid estate of Mount Vernon. Washington returned to Virginia and was at once employed by the local government in the colonial war against the French. In 1755 he was chief aide-de-camp in the disastrous Braddock campaign; and, in the retreat, only Washington's skill saved the beaten army from massacre.

Surveyor-Soldier-Farmer-Statesman.

Finding no immediate public need for his services, he retired to Mount Vernon, where he led the quiet, uneventful life of gentleman farmer until 1774, when he was sent as delegate to the first Continental Congress. He left peace, prosperity and home life behind him, and plunged at once into the whirlpool of colonial strife, knowing full well that all chances pointed to royal confiscation of his property, and perhaps to his own execution as a traitor.

In July, 1775, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the colonial forces. While the colonies were alive with brave, determined men, military leaders with actual experience were scarce. Only one man could be trusted with absolute command. And that man was selected.

Washington at once took hold, moulding the ragged, undisciplined minute men into solid battalions, turning a loose-jointed rabble into a compact, formidable fighting machine. It was a herculean task. But a Hercules had undertaken it.

The colonies were practically without funds, without credit, without sufficient arms, ammunition or provisions. They were called upon to face the greatest nation on earth, with an exhaustless treasure-chest, world-wide credit, and the best trained, best armed troops in Europe.

This, in a nutshell, was the situation that confronted Washington in the summer of 1775. How he met and surmounted it is a matter of school history. Step by step he built up an army of hardened veterans, armed them often from the supplies of conquered foes, suffered and starved with them in the black winter days of Valley Forge, employed almost superhuman skill and strategy to put his ill-equipped forces in such advantageous positions as to outweigh the disparity between themselves and their British opponents, and, at the end of an eight-year struggle, was rewarded by complete, overwhelming victory.

Shaping the New Nation's Course.

But, now that the War of the Revolution was fought and won, a new and equally baffling problem arose. It was necessary to create an absolutely new form of government; no models were at hand to follow. The country was free, but how was it to be governed, financed, protected?

In the solving of all these vexed questions Washington was recognized as the public leader; the man to turn to in perplexity; the chief on whose judgment to rely.

In 1787 he was unanimously elected first President of the United States, and for eight years he held office; guilding the young nation through the most critical and eventful epoch in its history. He might have been dictator, possibly even King, had he so decreed. But he had no such aims.

Having placed the country on a firm basis and having proved the success and permanence of its government, Washington refused a third term of office and retired to his Mount Vernon farm, where, three years later, Dec. 14, 1799, he died at the age of sixty-seven, leaving a name undimmed by greed, slander or strivings for self-advancement; an example for all ages to the children of the land he had made free, and whose earliest footsteps he had guided to the firm rock of national prosperity.

In Fame's long roll of heroes there is perhaps no man whose deeds outshine those of the Virginia planter's son, whom destiny and his own attainments raised to the pinnacle of human greatness.

The Helmet of Navarre by Bertha Runkle

Author of "THE TRUTH ABOUT TOLNA."

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Felix Broux, who tells the story, is page to Count Etienne de Mar, estranged son of the Duke of St. Quentin, a powerful French noble. The period is 1593, when Henry of Navarre, claimant of the French throne, is besieging Paris. The city is held by the League, under the Duke of Mayenne. St. Quentin is a follower of Henry, but has boldly come to Paris. Mayenne's nephew, Paul de Lorraine, tries to make Mar assassinate St. Quentin. Mar and Paul both love Lorance de Montluc, Mayenne's ward. Mayenne has promised her to Paul if the latter can get St. Quentin killed. Mar, accompanied by Felix, goes to serenade Lorance. They are attacked by Mayenne's guards, and by the help of an old lady escape through an underground passage. In the passage they meet Mayenne.

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CHAPTER XX.

"On Guard, Monsieur!"

(Continued.)

THE silence was profound. Mayenne had no companion following him. He was alone with his sword. He was not now head of the state, but only a man with a sword, standing opposite another man with a sword. Nor was he in the pink of form. Though he gave the effect, from his clear color and proud bearing, perhaps also from his masterful energy, of tremendous force and strength, his body was in truth a poor machine, his great corpulence making him clumsy and scant of breath. He must have known, as he eyed his supple antagonist, what the end would be. Yet he merely said:

"On guard, monsieur."

M. Etienne did not raise his weapon. I retreated a pace that I might not be in the way of his jump should Mayenne spring on him. M. Etienne said slowly:

"M. de Mayenne, this encounter was none of my contriving. Nor have I any wish to cross swords with you. Family quarrels are to be deprecated. Since I still intend to become your cousin, I must respectfully beg to be released from the obligation of fighting you."

A man knowing himself overmatched cannot refuse combat. He may, even as Mayenne had done, think himself compelled to offer it. But if he insists on forcing battle with a reluctant adversary, he must be a hothead indeed. And Mayenne was no hothead. He stood hesitant, feeling that he was made ridiculous in accepting the clemency and should be still more ridiculous to refuse it. He half lifted his sword, only to lower it again, till at last his good sense came to his relief in a laugh.

"M. de Mar, it appears that, after all, some explanations are necessary. You think that in declining to fight you put me in your debt. Possibly you are right. But if you expect that in gratitude I shall hand over Lorance de Montluc, you were never more mistaken. Never, while I live, shall she marry into the king's camp. Now, monsieur, that we understand each other, I abide by your decision whether we fight or not."

For answer M. Etienne put up his blade. The Duke of Mayenne, saluting with his, did the like.

"Mar," he said, "you stood off from us, like a coquetting girl, for three years. At length, last May, you refused point-blank to join us. I do not often ask a man twice, but I ask you. Will you join the League to-night and marry Lorance to-morrow?"

No man could have spoken with a franker grace. I believed then, I believe now, he meant it. M. Etienne believed he meant it.

"Monsieur," he answered, "I have shilly-shallied long; but I am planted squarely at last with my father on the king's side. You put your interesting nephew into my father's house to kill him; I shall not sign myself with the League."

"In that case," returned Mayenne, "perhaps we might each continue on his way."

"With all my heart, monsieur."

Each drew back against the wall to let the other pass, with a wary eye for daggers. Then M. Etienne, laughing a little, but watching Mayenne like a lynx, started to go by. The duke, seeing the look, suddenly raised his hands over his head, holding them there while both of us squeezed past him.

"Cousin Charles," said M. Etienne, "I see that when I have married Lorance you and I shall get on capitally. Till then, God have you ever in guard."

"I thank you, monsieur. You make me immortal."

"I have no need to make you witty. M. de Mayenne, when you have submitted to the king, as you will one of these days, I shall have as delightful a kinsman as heart of man could wish. You and I will yet drink a loving cup together. Till that happy hour I am your good enemy. Fare you well, monsieur."

He bowed; the duke, half laughing despite a considerable ire, returned the obeisance with all pomp. M. Etienne took me by the arm and departed. Mayenne stood still for a space; then we heard his retreating footsteps, and the glimmer of his light slowly faded away.

"It wasn't necessary to tell him the door is bolted," M. Etienne muttered.

We hurried along now without precaution, knowing that the floor which had supported Mayenne would support us. The consequence was that we stumbled abruptly against a step and fell with a force like to break our kneecaps. I picked myself up at once and ran headlong up the stairs, to hit my crown on the ceiling and reel back on M. Etienne, sweeping him off his feet, so that we rolled in a struggling heap on the stones of the passage. And for the minute the place was no longer dark; I saw more lightning than ever flashed in the Rue Coupejarrets.

"Are you hurt, Felix?" cried M. Etienne, the first to disentangle himself.

"No," I said, groaning; "but I banged my head. She did not say it was a trap-door."

We ascended the stairs a second time—this time most cautiously on our hands and knees. Above us at the end we could feel, with upleaping of spirit, a wooden ceiling.

"Ah, I have the cord!" he exclaimed.

The next instant we heard a faint but most comforting tinkle somewhere above us. Before we had time to wonder whether any marked it but us we heard steps overhead, and a noise as of a chest being pulled about, and then the trap lifted. We climbed out into a silk-mercer's shop.

"Faith, my man," said M. Etienne to the little bourgeois who had opened to us, "I am glad to see you appear so promptly."

He looked at us, somewhat troubled or alarmed.

"You must have met"—— he suggested with hesitancy.

"Yes," said M. Etienne; "but he did not object. We are, of course, of the initiated."

"Of course, of course," the little fellow assented, with a funny assumption of knowing all about it. "Not every one has the secret of the passage. Well, I can call myself a lucky man. 'Tis mighty few mercers have a duke in their shop as often as I."

We looked curiously about us. The shop was low and dim, with piles of stuff in rolls on the shelves, and other stuffs lying loose on the counter before us, as if the man had just been measuring them—gorgeous brocades and satins. Above us a bell on the rafter still quivered.

He looked at us somewhat troubled or alarmed.

"Yes, that is the bell of the trap," the proprietor said, following our glance. "Customers do not know where it rings from. And if I am not at liberty to open I drop my brass yardstick on the floor. But they told you that, doubtless, monsieur?" he added, regarding M. Etienne again a little uneasily.

"They told me something else I had near forgotten," M. Etienne answered, and, drawing a crown in the air, gave the password. "For the Cause."

"For the King," the shopkeeper made instant rejoinder, drawing in the air in his turn a letter C and the numeral X.

M. Etienne laid a gold piece on the counter, and if the shopkeeper had felt any doubts of this well-dressed gallant who wore no hat they vanished in its radiance.

"And now, my friend, let us out into the street and forget our faces."

The man took up his candle to light us to the door.

"Perhaps it would not trouble monsieur to say a word for me over there?" he suggested, pointing in the direction of the tunnel. "M. le Duc has every confidence in me. Still, it would do no harm if monsieur should mention how quickly I let him out."

"When I see him I will surely mention it," M. Etienne promised him. "Continue to be vigilant to-night, my friend. There is another man to come."

Followed by the little bourgeois's thanks and adieus, we walked out into the sweet open air. As soon as his door was shut again we took to our heels, nor stopped running till we had put half a dozen streets between us and the mouth of the tunnel. Then we walked along in breathless silence.

Presently M. Etienne cried out:

"Death of my life! Had I fought there in the burrow I should have changed the history of France!"

CHAPTER XXI.

A Chance Encounter.

THE street before us was as orderly as the aisle of Notre Dame. Few wayfarers passed us; those there were talked together as placidly as if lovetrysts and melees existed not, and tunnels and countersigns were but the smoke of a dream. It was a street of shops all shuttered, while above the burghers' families went respectably to bed.

"This is the Rue de la Ferronnerie," my master said, pausing a moment to take his bearings. "See under the lantern, the sign of the Pierced Heart. The little shop is in the Rue de la Soierie. We are close by the Halles—we must have come half a mile underground. Well, we'll swing about in a circle to get home. For this night I've had enough of the Hotel de Lorraine."

And I. But I held my tongue about it, as became me.

"They were wider awake than I thought—those Lorrainers. Pardieu! Felix, you and I came closer quarters with death than is entirely amusing."

"If that door had not opened"—— I shuddered.

"A new saint in the calendar—la Sainte Ferou! But what a madcap of a saint, then! My faith, she must have led them a dance when Francis I. was king!

"Natheless it galls me," he went on, half to himself, "to know that I was lost by my own folly, saved by pure chance. I underrated the enemy—worst mistake in the book of strategy. I came near flinging away two lives and making a most unsightly mess under a lady's window."

"Monsieur made somewhat of a mess as it was."

"Aye. I would I knew whether I killed Brie. We'll go round in the morning and find out."

"I am thankful that monsieur does not mean to go to-night."

"Not to-night, Felix! I've had enough. No; we'll get home without passing near the Hotel de Lorraine, if we go outside the walls to do it. To-night I draw my sword no more."

To this day I have no quite clear idea of how we went. A strange city at night—Paris of all cities—is a labyrinth. I know that after a time we came out in some meadows along the river bank, traversed them and plunged once more into narrow, high-walled streets. It was very late, and lights were few. We had started in clear starlight, but now a rack of clouds hid even their pale shine.

"The snake-hole over again," said M. Etienne. "But we are almost at our own gates."

But, as in the snake-hole, came light. Turning a sharp corner we ran straight into a gentleman and his porte-flambeau, swinging along at as smart a pace as we.

"A thousand pardons," M. Etienne cried to his encounterer, the possessor of years and gravity but of no great size, whom he had almost knocked down. "I heard you, but knew not you were so close. We were speeding to get home."

The personage was also of a portliness, and the collision had knocked the wind out of him. He leaned panting against the wall. As he scanned M. Etienne's open countenance and princely dress his alarm vanished.

"It is unseemly to go about on a night like this without a lantern," he said with asperity. "The municipality should forbid it. I shall certainly bring the matter up at the next sitting."

"Monsieur is a member of the Parliament?" M. Etienne asked with immense respect.

"I have that honor, monsieur," the little man replied, delighted to impress us, as he himself was impressed, by the sense of his importance.

"Oh," said M. Etienne with increasing solemnity, "perhaps monsieur had a hand in a certain decree of the 28th June?"

The little man began to look uneasy.

"There was, as monsieur says, a measure passed that day," he stammered.

"A rebellious and contumacious decree," M. Etienne rejoined, "most offensive to the general-duke." Whereupon he fingered his sword.

"Monsieur," the little deputy cried, "we meant no offense to his Grace, or to any true Frenchman. We but desire peace after all these years of blood. We were informed that his Grace was angry; yet we believed that even he will come to see the matter in a different light"——

"You have acted in a manner insulting to his Grace of Mayenne," M. Etienne repeated inexorably, and he glanced up the street and down the street to make sure the coast was clear. The wretched little deputy's teeth chattered.

The linkman had retreated to the other side of the way, where he seemed on the point of fleeing, leaving his master to his fate. I thought it would be a shame if the badgered deputy had to stumble home in the dark, so I growled out to the fellow:

"Stir one step at your peril!"

I was afraid he would drop the flambeau and run, but he did not; he only sank bank against the wall, eying my sword with exceeding deference. He knew not that there was but a foot of blade in the scabbard.

The burgher looked up the street and down the street, after M. Etienne's example, but there was no help to be seen or heard. He turned to his tormentor with the valor of a mouse at bay.

"Monsieur, beware what you do. I am Pierre Marceau!"

"Oh, you are Pierre Marceau? And can M. Pierre Marceau explain how he happened to be faring forth from his dwelling at this unholy hour?"

"I am not faring forth; I am faring home. I—we had a little con—that is, not to say a conference, but merely a little discussion on matters of no importance"——

"I have the pleasure," interrupted M. Etienne sternly, "of knowing where M. Marceau lives. M. Marceau's errand in this direction is not accounted for."

"But I was going home—on my sacred honor I was! Ask Jacques, else. But as we went down the Rue de l'Eveque we saw two men in front of us. As they reached the wall by M. de Mirabeau's garden a gang of footpads fell on them. The two drew blades and defended themselves, but the ruffians were a dozen—a score. We ran for our lives."

M. Etienne wheeled round to me.

"Felix, here is work for us. As I was saying, M. Marceau, your decree is most offensive to the general-duke, and therefore, since he is my particular enemy, most pleasing to me. A beautiful night, is it not, sir? I wish you a delightful walk home." He seized me by the hand and we dashed up the street.

At the corner the noise of a fray came faintly but plainly to our ears. M. le Comte without hesitation plunged down a lane in the direction of the sound. "I said I wanted no more fighting to-night, but two against a mob! We know how it feels."

The clash of steel on steel grew ever louder, and as we wheeled around a jutting garden wall we came full upon the combatants.

"A rescue, a rescue!" cried M. Etienne. "Shout, Felix! Montjole St. Denis! A rescue, a rescue!"

We charged down the street, drawing our swords and shouting at the top of our lungs.

(To Be Continued.)

"The Masquerader," by Katherine Cecil Thurston, author of "The Gambler," will follow "The Helmet of Navarre," on May 21, in The Evening World.